1sCoon E-5 (no date) 1951 M1 Middle East
Ref 1003
[Village of Ulad 'Abd al-Mumin]

had died by the rifle, and many of their brothers as well. Some provision must be made for young widows and their helpless children. To the human population of fifty-seven was added an animal roster of one hundred and twenty-five head: 10 cows, 1 calf, 15 sheep, 80 goats, 1 donkey, 2 mules, and 16 dogs. Six of the men owned the goats, and one the sheep; three men had none. Each man, however, owned a cow, for all needed milk.

There were a total of 923 food-bearing trees—more than 16 to a person, or 92 to a family. These were divided as follows: almonds, 525; figs, 272; olives, 71; pomegranates, 33; apricots, 16; oranges, lemons, and walnuts, 2 of each. Every man owned at least 4 almond, 15 fig, and 3 olive trees. Dried almonds and figs are absolutely necessary to sustain life in late winter once the grain has been eaten, while olive oil is the essential fat. The other kinds of trees produce useful fruits, but the Riffians can get along without them.

In these high valleys arboriculture is the main business of the people, and they prune, water, graft, and fertilize their trees with extreme care. Compared to this activity the Riffian spends but little time in his fields; he owns enough tillage for only about four weeks' plowing time a year, with a range of from twenty to forty-five days among the ten men. Those who have little are hired to work for those who have more, on the ancient system of granting a fifth to the plowman. Work on the vegetable gardens rates a fourth, while he who cares for another man's trees receives a third of the fruit, aside from windfalls which are for women, children, and the poor.

Unfruitful trees have long ago been felled to make way for the silver-leaved olives and the lofty walnuts. Up high on the ridges to either side one can still cut cedar and even a few pine. Below the man-made tree line is a zone of brushy goat pasture, and below this, but still steep, the vineyards. Here the families gather in September to pick the grapes, which they dry into raisins to be eaten with the figs and almonds. Up the valley a way there are two public installations, a small turbine water mill of familiar appearance, which belongs to the grandsons of its builder, and an olive press, which serves several villages. This olive press is actually near the center of another village, inhabited by holy people who never fight. Their holiest member regulates the protocol of olive pressing, aside from serving as imām to lead the Friday prayer, in which the grown men of all the villages of that part of the valley participate.